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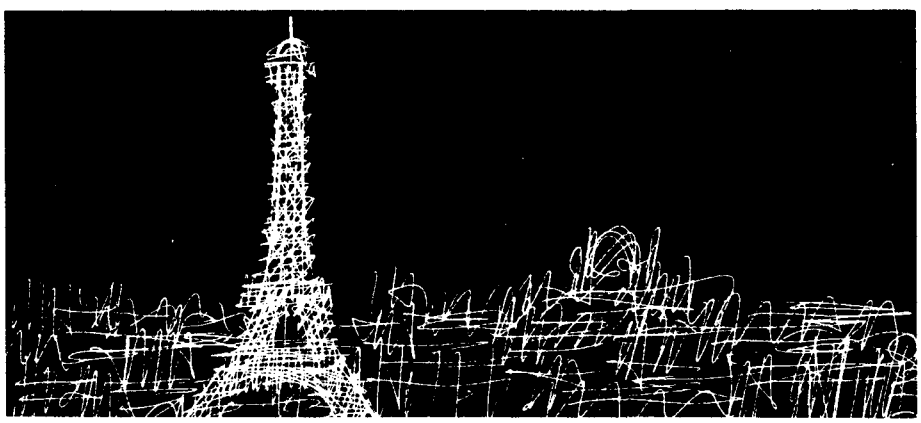

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LETTER FROM AN EDITOR

Peter Steinfels on William Shannon

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WILLIAM PFAFF *on Kennedy, McNamara and Johnson*
MAURICE R. BERUBE *on New York's public schools*
JAMES GRAHAM *on New York politics, New Haven renewal*
MORTIMER GRAVES *on Vietnam, history of the dilemma*
STEVEN V. ROBERTS *on American cities in general*

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NEWS AND VIEWS

The 36 South West Africans on trial for their lives in Pretoria, South Africa, are a small group of hundreds in the territory arrested and detained over the past year by the racist South African government and charged under the conveniently broad terms of the Terrorism Act. Some will be used as state witnesses against those currently being tried; others may eventually get a trial of their own in one of Pretoria's kangaroo courts. There is no reason to expect that the responsible citizens of South Africa will be less craven or indifferent toward any new defendants than they are toward the 36 now. It is easy, of course, at the safe distance of thousands of miles, to be contemptuous of such people. It is more honorable to send cash to help continue the defense of the 36. The addresses of two groups raising funds to defray their legal expenses (which run to about $15,000 a month) are: Africa Department, National Council of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, N.Y., N.Y. 10027; and American Committee on Africa, 211 East 43rd Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10017.

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The last word in the controversy over the sermon preached before President Johnson by Dr. Cotesworth Pickney Lewis in Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg, Va., belongs to the *Catholic Virginian,* newsweekly of the Diocese of Richmond:

"Pity Mr. Lewis for taking his job too seriously, for believing that Bruton Church is more than an antique shrine that is hallowed because George Washington had a pew there. Pity Mr. Lewis for having the audacity to think that he, a proclaimer of the Christian message, was supposed to speak of the morality of of a nation's acts and to call them into question.

"Pity that Establishment which, when the world stands on the verge of holocaust, can only think of manners." . . .

Which pretty much takes care of papers like the Camden *Catholic Star Herald* which argued that "there's a time and place for everything." How one-sided their coin. Dr. George R. Davis, or Rev. Billy Graham, or Archbishop Robert E. Lucey can hawk out a message before Mr. Johnson and none of them bats an eyelash (not even when Archbishop Lucey is rewarded with a presidential assignment to oversee the elections in South Vietnam). But let one minister ask a few hard questions with the right person sitting in the congregation, and wow! . . . We discover all over again how strenuously too many Christians object to hard questions from pulpits.

•

The London *Sunday Telegraph,* in reviewing *A Question of Conscience,* Charles Davis' new book explaining why he left the Catholic Church:

"What will, or should, trouble the bewildered leaders of post-Conciliar Roman Catholicism, from the Pope downwards, is the ease with which the new speculative theology has apparently undermined the faith of a man of powerful intellect protectively nurtured in the seminary."

•

Senator Vance Hartke on the war in Vietnam:

"An enemy greater than the Viet Cong to South Vietnam is corruption in the Saigon government and a general apathy of the people whose war we are fighting . . . While entrenched officialdom sun themselves at the swimming pools of the Cercle Sportif, the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam fights the war from 10 'til 4—taking the evenings off and living off the villagers.

"While Americans relentlessly pursue an elusive enemy, landlords hold out for higher prices or refuse to sell land to the U. S. government on which to build tent cities for refugees from the battle area."

•

Priority of Values Dept.:

—Nov. 18: Peace Corps director Jack Vaughn protests the drafting of Peace Corps volunteers. "Pulling a volunteer off a productive job at midtour is unfair to the nation, to host country, the Peace Corps and the individual," said Vaughn. [Great quiet]

—Nov. 20: Secretary of Defense McNamara directs that military personnel who wish to enter civilian police work be given early discharges. "The time has come," said McNamara, "when the American people are going to rise up and revolt against the lawbreaker in this country. We are going to have to obey the law." [Great huzzahs]

•

The book is closing on the ouster of the Paulist Fathers from the Diocese of Dallas-Fort Worth on fiat of Bishop Thomas K. Gorman (allegedly because the Paulists had not achieved what they were assigned to do).

Appeals that carried all the way to Rome have failed, and by Dec. 28 the Paulists are ordered to be packed and gone. The Newman apostolate will pass into the hands of the diocesan clergy, and the prosperous suburban parish that was the center of the Paulists' activities will become a diocesan fief.

Bishop Gorman, meanwhile, escapes with only a mild rebuke from the diocesan priests' senate. A resolution voted by the senate speaks of a "climate of disappointment and insecurity" generated by the affair and asks that "in the future all such decisions . . . be made only after thorough consultation with the People of God most immediately involved with the parish or institution concerned."

Few are consoled; fewer, still, are hopeful.

•

Odds and Ends:

—The New York *Times'* coverage of Bill Buckley's first class on urban problems at the New School for Social Research (Nov. 21) was carried in its entertainment section.

—Last month a lady caller to Merle Pollis' talk show on WJAS-Pittsburgh commented that civil rights priests Groppi, McIlvane and Rice should be disrobed.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Vietnam "Dialogue"

University City, Mo.

To the Editors: I should like to comment briefly on William V. Shannon's article, "Still Time for Politics," in your issue for Nov. 17. May I say at once that I have been in persistent disagreement with most of Mr. Shannon's writings on Mr. Johnson and the Vietnam war, but also that I share his alarm about the increasing shrillness of what passes for political "discourse" these days. I wholly agree with him that civilization and civility are alike more fragile artifacts than is commonly supposed. I also agree with him that there are forces in this country *by comparison with which* Mr. Johnson *et al.* emerge as "responsible centrists."

Beyond this point of agreement, however, I think it desirable to attempt to state a few propositions which seem relevant to the present climate of opinion.

1)—Heat in political conflict tends to be directly proportional to the centrality of the issue to the lives of the participants, and to the rigidity and unresponsiveness of existing policy machinery and leadership.

2)—One cannot understand the virulence of the present attacks on the President and his advisers without recognition that Mr. Johnson is widely believed to have betrayed the people who elected him on this crucial issue. While the evidence is not wholly conclusive, there is enough of it to support a plausible case that betrayal, in a fairly precise sense, actually happened, *i.e.*, that Johnson told the electorate that "American boys" ought not to do the job which "Asian boys" should be doing, knowing at the time that he intended precisely the opposite as soon after election as the situation demanded. Whether or not a technical "betrayal" of this sort existed, there can be said to have been one in a deeper or broader sense. That is, one of the regular and quite predictable rhythms in American political history

(Continued on page 365)

NEWS & VIEWS: 346 **CORRESPONDENCE: 347**
EDITORIALS: 347
BUNDY'S PLAN FOR NEW YORK SCHOOLS: *Maurice R. Berube* **349**
THE LIBERALS' WAR: *William Pfaff* **350**
LETTER FROM AN EDITOR: *Peter Steinfels* **352**
A THEOLOGY OF CONFLICT: *John J. Lally* **355**
THE STAGE: *John Simon* **358** ***THE SCREEN:*** *Philip T. Hartung* **359**
VERSE: *James Carroll* **360**
BOOKS: 361

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THE LAST MODERATE

After the news of Robert McNamara's forthcoming departure to the nether outpost of the World Bank, it was anyone's guess in Washington's rumor-laden atmosphere what would follow. The consensus was that something quite ominous was afoot, either an invasion of North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the idea for which was advanced by Generals Eisenhower and Bradley, or possibly saturation bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong. Although the precise reasons for his leaving remained obscure, the evidence did suggest that apprehensions about a dramatic new escalation were not far off the mark.

Mr. McNamara, hailed on his departure as the last moderate bulwark, was nevertheless a bulwark which had been consistently passed over in recent months in favor of men like Gen. Westmoreland and Adm. Sharp. Though the Secretary could well have resigned over basic issues of policy (the President had even of late omitted his name from his list of "most important advisors"), he chose to remain the faithful bureaucrat to the last, thereby foregoing an option which could have had the profoundest political impact. Leaving now when pressures are building for the President to intensify the war, Mr. McNamara exemplified a man who, despite the gains he achieved in coordinating the Pentagon under civilian control, was unable to advance a viable set of policy alternatives. In retrospect it appears as though McNamara served as a figurehead civilian, who, as Andrew Kopkind wrote in the *New Statesman*, served "to legitimize the decisions which went inevitably in favor of the military." Much of the speculation was concerned with the notion that the displacement was a political move aimed at shoring up sagging prestige in the face of an increasingly restive hawkish segment of the electorate, those eager to let the military "get it over with." The obvious glee evinced by Barry Goldwater and newspapers like the Chicago *Tribune* indicates how well the move will sit with Republicans who would have had

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McNamara and, naturally, Johnson, as sitting ducks if the country's mood turns to the right. For the *Tribune*, the military which had been "muzzled and never called upon . . . to formulate the decisions which would offer a hope of extricating the United States from Viet Nam" will presumably now be heard from.

Doubtless, Mr. McNamara's removal was the result of an increasingly desperate Administration, Gen. Westmoreland's Thanksgiving platitudes notwithstanding. But the move also heralded the fact that Mr. Johnson is increasingly anxious to consolidate his power in the light of widespread and pointed dissent from the left which had taken a liking to the Secretary. The move must also have carried ominous implications for those congressional doves who have been counting on negotiations to begin before the elections and will now either have to ride out their campaigns on their own if they remain doves or, as seems to be happening with Senator Morse, severely compromise their criticism of the war. Even more profound will be the impact on Senator Eugene McCarthy's efforts which thus far have not been demonstrably exciting nor conducted on a plane likely to win adherents outside the universities.

The pace of history seems to increase as the elections approach, and Mr. Johnson may well be tempted by the impatience of the country to "win" the war before the summer is over. But in the rush of decisions to unclog the stalemate the danger grows that to "see the war through" may portend the onset of war with China.

CARDINAL SPELLMAN

It is not easy for us to write an editorial on the death of Cardinal Spellman. The newspapers are full of anecdotes about him, about the countless friends he had in high places, about his innumerable warm encounters with cab drivers, cops, soldiers, politicians, philanthropists, priests, Catholics, Protestants and Jews. Apparently he made an indelible impression on those who met him. We never did. Neither he nor his office ever contacted us about anything, either to praise us or blame us. He let us alone and we more or less let him alone. He lived in one Catholic world and we lived in another. So complete was the separation that we had little access to the usual gossip, the underground news, that always circulates about men in high places.

We were never sorry about this mutual isolation. At a time when independent lay Catholic journalism was a rarity in America, we were glad to be let alone; that was all we asked of him and that he gave us. Now and then of course we had moments of doubt. Somehow, thinking of the best of all possible worlds, we wondered if this kind of mutual isolation was healthy. It was certainly healthy for our own freedom, but was it the kind of relationship which should hold between the Archbishop and at least some of his, even troublesome, laity? Probably not. But the worry was always of the most theoretical kind. Our freedom was too important to us to be jeopardized by doubtful ventures in personal contact. And the Cardinal, for his part, apparently judged that not much would be gained by seeking us out.

In the most literal sense of the words, then, we knew practically nothing about him except what we read in the newspapers. We would be less than honest if we suggested that what we read pleased us. His seemingly excessive patriotism, his slowness in allowing liturgical reform and ecumenical discussions, his preoccupation with the material prosperity of the archdiocese—well, the list is very long. He stood for a kind of Catholicism, oriented toward bureaucratic efficiency, money raising and good public relations, which we felt symbolized the social success and power of the Church at the same time as it symbolized the spiritual failure of Catholic Christianity in New York.

Fortunately, there is more to human life than issues like that. We can believe it when the papers report that Cardinal Spellman was much beloved, that he was kind and thoughtful, that he responded to people and cared for them. Were Christianity nothing but an impersonal ideology the only thing that would count would be the large public issues, the failure or success of institutions and policies. But that is not enough, or shouldn't be, for the Christian. Kindness and solicitude count for much. And they must count in any attempt to sum up the meaning of Cardinal Spellman's life and career. Those who knew him personally spoke well of him. They liked him and respected him. We could do no better at this point than to point out that testimony.

SCHOOLS AREN'T ENOUGH

One of the most enduring of American beliefs is that popular education is the foundation of a working democracy, the guarantee of the nation's political stability and economic progress. Given the pragmatic nature of most American education (geared to jobs and good citizenship), the faith has largely been justified. Thus, to many, the Supreme Court decision of 1954 seemed to go to the heart of the Negro's dilemma. If Negroes got the same educational opportunities as whites, it was argued, they would soon achieve equality in American society. In a generation or two, their troubles would be over. The naiveté of that view now seems appalling, not only because it misjudged the depth and virulence of American racism, North and South, but also because it laid upon the schools a burden which they cannot carry alone.

It is increasingly evident that no reform of slum schools will in itself be sufficient to liberate black children from the ghettos that entrap them. Many ghetto residents have recognized the passing of one more Ameri-

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can dream—the school as the ladder of success—but it has been harder to convince the experts, the social scientists and professional educators who tend to view reality through the peephole of their own theories. Their faith in blueprints, in programs for "meaningful learning experiences" is so stubborn that it is something of a miracle when they not only admit a mistake (instead of institutionalizing it) but also acknowledge total defeat. That happened recently when the New York University School of Education's experiment in upgrading a school in the notorious Bedford Stuyvesant ghetto in Brooklyn was declared a failure. The University's Clinic of Learning at Junior High School 57, whose record of achievement was one of the worst in the city, was funded by the Ford Foundation and the Board of Education and had a large and varied staff. Yet it met with disaster.

Typically, university officials blamed the bureaucratic rigidity of the school system and the principal scored the Clinic for being dilettante and imposing theories without a careful study of the school and neighborhood. Perhaps the final word in the controversy, however, was not spoken but acted out by one of the students. An experiment in reading the Negro *Amsterdam News,* while sipping cocoa for relaxation, was abandoned when a boy threw his jacket into the cocoa vat. His gesture of defiance, contempt, perhaps despair, spoke above the squabble between the experts and the bureaucrats. More realistic than his well-intentioned, middle-class mentors, he seemed to grasp that no matter what kind of laboratory of learning his school might become it will not eliminate the ghetto or free him from its violence and fury.

The message of the boy who despoiled the cocoa is that most of his education is derived from the jungle outside the classroom. Staying in school until he is 16 will not give him the power either to clear that jungle or even to cope with it. There is a limit to what a school can do.

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BUNDY'S PLAN FOR NEW YORK SCHOOLS

PARENT POWER

McGeorge Bundy's plan to reorganize the New York City school system into a fascimile of many suburban school districts constitutes a fortuitous mix of politics and education.

One of the major problems of urban schools is that they are insulated from the public they are supposed to serve. Last spring, Mayor Lindsay surprised New York's school bureaucrats by obtaining permission from the State Legislature to reorganize the city's educational behemoth (which serves over one million students, more pupils than in all of Massachusetts' schools) in order to provide "community participation." The Legislature directed Lindsay to have his proposals ready by December 1st; the Mayor, in turn, commissioned Ford Foundation President McGeorge Bundy to head a blue ribbon panel to draw up a report.

The Bundy panel recommends a decentralization scheme that has far reaching implications for all city school systems. In essence, it advises that New York City schools be organized into from 30 to 60 Community School Districts which are to be autonomous and under the direct supervision of school boards representing parents and the Mayor; each board will have six parent representatives elected by a majority of parents in the schools and five representatives chosen by the Mayor from a list supplied by a central education agency. The plan provides a formal mechanism for parents to formulate policy and also gives the Mayor a measure of control over the schools.

Many educators feel that only such a drastic revamping of city school systems can help the black poor. "The most fundamental crisis in urban education today," Philadelphia School Superintendent Mark Shedd writes in the October *Educational Leadership,* "is a failure to produce organizations capable of adapting the program of a given school to the needs of a given child." The inability to integrate city schools plus the dismal results of compensatory programs leave no alternative. "The trick, then," Shedd continues, "is to *remake* and revitalize through decentralization the quantitatively massive and qualitatively sluggish school systems . . . [so as] to create a climate in which beneficial changes can flourish."

All of which should make the Bundy plan respectable. Instead, New York educators consider it extreme. What makes the plan appear radical is "community participation"—a euphemism for black power in the schools. It was the series of parent confrontations, beginning with Intermediate School 201 last year, demanding control, which prodded the Mayor to step in and shake up the city school system. In the process, ghetto parents have changed the ground rules of urban education. Even U.S. Commissioner of Education Harold Howe II is coming around to the view of the Harlem parent. In a major speech this fall, Howe, once known as the "Commissioner of Integration," gave black-power adherents a tacit blessing when he acknowledged the need to give "parents a part in school planning, school decisions and school operations . . . [going beyond] a PTA tea party or the once-a-year school open house . . . [so that parents will be] a part of the formal school structure."

Nevertheless, New York City schoolmen are alarmed. Predictably, the Board of Education declined to preside

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over its own liquidation. Its President, Alfred Giardino, the only Board member on the Bundy panel, commented: "Serious problems must arise in recasting, in one quick stroke, the largest educational system in the world." The Council of Supervisory Associations, representing principals, agreed.

The major opponent of the plan, however, appears to be the teachers' union, the United Federation of Teachers—AFL-CIO, even though a few years ago it might have drawn up such a plan itself. But, as the union has grown stronger, the need to rely on parents as an ally in dealing with the Board of Education has diminished. At first glance, it might appear that the UFT is just trying to protect its white teachers from the wrath of black parents. Actually there is more to the union's strategy: at stake is the future of the teachers' union as a power in city schools.

In less than a decade the national American Federation of Teachers has capitalized on the alienation of city teachers from stagnant school bureaucracies and rapidly changing school populations. Most of the AFT's 135,000 members teach in large cities; the rival National Education Association has one million members most of whom teach in suburban and rural schools. In New York City, the teachers' union has now reached a position where it can influence educational policy through contract negotiations. At issue in last September's teacher strike was policy: whether the union-conceived More Effective Schools plan (a controversial program of small classes and a wide range of services) would be expanded and whether teachers could evict disruptive children from classrooms. The union did not get what it asked for on either issue, but the UFT did succeed in writing into the contract an agreement to set aside $10 million for experimental education projects. If the Bundy proposals are adopted, the union would be severly limited; the UFT could only bargain for wages and working conditions with a central educational agency, which no longer would be managing the schools.

Lindsay hopes to steer the Bundy report through the State Legislature, thus avoiding the kind of racial quagmire that swallowed up his Civilian Review Board last year. However, battalions are already forming along racial lines, led by white teachers and other professionals on the one hand and black power groups on the other. The polarization has already provoked sharp comment; the moderate *Amsterdam News* sees UFT President Albert Shanker and the principals as the equivalent of Southern racists, whereas the usually unflappable New York *Times* views the black power militants as the real racists.

Lindsay faces another hurdle in persuading State legislators that his part in the running of the schools will not open a political Pandora's box. Caution about the Mayor's role prompted many of the last-minute changes in the Bundy report. Should the Legislature enact the Bundy plan, the effect could be monumental. Educational power will be shifted to ghetto parents. And slum schools may never be the same again.

MAURICE R. BERUBE

(Maurice R. Berube is Chief of Research and Information, New York City Office of Education Liaison.)

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE LIBERALS' WAR

Senator Robert Kennedy's declaration that the "whole moral position" of the United States in Vietnam has shifted since his brother was President may prove a powerful factor in the political controversy within the United States. But, like the announced departure from cabinet office of Robert McNamara, it may also obscure the sources and character of this country's very deep crisis. Both events reinforce the idea that this is "Johnson's war," opposed by proper liberals. Actually Vietnam is American liberalism's war, which most liberals now want to disavow.

Indeed, if it really were true that we now are fighting "so that we don't have to fight in Thailand, so that we don't have to fight on the West Coast of the United States . . ."—as Mr. Kennedy paraphrases the latest Administration rationale for the war—the affair would make some kind of sense. It could then be a morally defensible war, and more than that it manifestly would directly serve the security of the United States, the proper and essential objective of a nation's foreign and defense policies.

Actually, of course, this new Administration argument is only the latest and least creditable of its improvisations in a desperate running debate with its critics. The unhappy truth is that we are in Vietnam because Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy put us there, and because President Johnson chose to stay. Senator Kennedy's contention that in the early 1960's the United States simply wanted the South Vietnamese to be free to decide their own future (and that the Vietnamese supported us in November 1963 but shortly thereafter stopped) is only disingenuously to be contrasted with the latest Administration rhetoric. The Senator probably is right that his brother would have drawn back from this level of involvement, these casualties, this destruction. But this surely would have been a matter of instinctive prudence, the caution of a man with better antennae for these matters, more im-

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agination, a better sense of the open-endedness of foreign conflict than Mr. Johnson has demonstrated—not better principles of foreign policy.

The principles plainly are the same today as they were in 1962-63—only narrowed and hardened in crisis. Lyndon Johnson takes liberal "globalism" seriously. Like his liberal predecessors, he believes that America today leads free men against slavery—against not only Communism but disease, ignorance, poverty. He believes in the sentimental and essentially Manichean liberal conception of a world divided between progress and retrogression, "peaceful revolution" and destructive revolution, between liberal economic progress with eventual plenty for all and the sterility and chaos of "false" political doctrine. He believes that the struggle is trans-national, ideological, moral: that we must lead the world into a manner of life that resembles our own. Lyndon Johnson simply found himself with a crisis in which this great enterprise could no longer be carried out through foreign aid, the Peace Corps, and technical assistance cadres. What was he to do? The luxury of accomplishing the liberal objective with clean hands was not afforded him. But he stubbornly moved forward on the course which had already been laid out.

It had been laid out by the men John Kennedy had brought to Washington, the best men he had been able to recruit from the liberal academic and intellectual elites of this country: foundation president Dean Rusk, Cambridge economic development theoretician Walt Rostow, retired general—and liberal military theoretician—Maxwell Taylor, Yale dean McGeorge Bundy, innovating industrialist Robert McNamara. They said that Vietnam was a test of democracy in Asia. They said that failure there would undermine fledgling democracies everywhere. They said that the new doctrines of Asian Communism had to be discredited or they would tear other societies apart in other places. They said that there had to be a liberal political and economic revolution in Vietnam under our sponsorship or other peoples elsewhere would turn in despair to obscurantist and destructive Communist revolution.

These were the theories—the liberal theories—of the late 1950's and early 1960's. Liberals today, if they are to be honest with themselves and claim a role in the intellectual reconstruction of our policies in the future, must acknowledge that Lyndon Johnson's catastrophe came about because he believed these things and acted upon them in virtually the only way left open to him. Peaceful methods had collapsed; if the issues were as important as they were made out to be, war was the intellectually consistent choice to make.

Thus the effort—half-deliberate, half-inadvertent—to make this war out to be the work of crotch-scratching country-boy Lyndon Johnson, or to find evidence that Dean Rusk was never a real liberal, at least on China, or to glorify Robert McNamara as a prisoner of loyalty, now liberated, can have the effect of reinforcing the delusions which actually caused this war. Daniel Moynihan and Richard Rovere are two liberals, serious men, who have come to understand and say this (Moynihan in his recent speech to the ADA, Rovere in the Oct. 28 *New Yorker*). They acknowledge that this is the liberals' war—but admit that they don't like it yet don't know what to do about it. In this kind of honesty lies hope. If the American intellectual and political community could confront, not Lyndon Johnson, but its own responsibility, it is conceivable that the 1968 election could articulate a reappraisal not of personalities but of American principles.

The McNamara resignation—or defenestration, if that is what is was—is alarming not because Robert McNamara is a Dove—he is not—but because he seems the last man left in high office capable of dispassion. Robert McNamara's power lay in the fact that he courageously followed where the calculations led. His weakness was that he hardly could grasp that the more important factors in politics and society are unquantifiable. For seven years he generously subsidized the positivist schools of American political and social science to supply this missing factor in the Pentagon's policy parameters, and they failed him. He has, it seems fair to say, come to understand the necessity of this failure and that there are things which are not knowable to what Pascal once described as the men of mathematical mind: he seems to have come to respect this, even if it made him uneasy.

But where the figures marched, he stubbornly followed. Given a simplistic definition of the meaning and import of the war in Vietnam, he marched into it, fighting it as well and humanely as he knew. He defended the calculation, accepting vilification. But when later figures, correcting earlier estimates, suggested that even on his principles this war might not prove—in his language—cost-effective, or that bombing of the North, given calculations of damage, casualties, political costs and lack of political gains, might not have been the good idea it once seemed, Mr. McNamara stubbornly would think this through and voice his conclusions.

Decent men with the kind of moral, emotional and professional investments McNamara has made in this war might be forgiven rationalization, an abandonment of objectivity. Few of us, mathematical minds or not, can always be faithful to the calculations. But Robert McNamara, while he is a man of undoubted flaws, strikes me as nonetheless willing to go anywhere the cost-effectiveness analysis leads—even when the costs are personal and heavy. One fears that he was alone in this quality among the highest leadership of this Administration. The rest are overcommitted, even distraught, by the crisis, by the violence of their critics, by the remorselessness of their Vietnamese enemies. They are no longer capable of detachment: they are victims now, not masters of events.

WILLIAM PFAFF

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LETTER FROM AN EDITOR

A reply to William V. Shannon

PETER STEINFELS

Pleasant surprise. My airmail copy of *Commonweal* is in the mailbox. Back upstairs for a second cup of coffee. I skim "News and Views." I skip quickly to see what Hoosier metaphor my friend Father McKenzie has used to enscapsulate his scholarly opinion of the Dutch catechism. Aha, a beauty! "Safe as a case of whiskey at a Methodist picnic." I turn to William V. Shannon and his critique (Nov. 17) of *Commonweal's* editorial tone on Vietnam, his rejection of civil disobedience, etc., etc.

My first reaction was to write a reply at once, apparently solicitious but in fact deeply sarcastic, in the all-too-infectious French style. Shannon is a tempting target. He refers to "a sneaking taste for violence," which indeed inflicts every son of Adam. But how unconsciously ironic when it is meant as a damning reproach to the opponents of that systematic, overwhelming violence—not sneaking at all—which is being inflicted on Vietnam. Shannon reminds us "that civilization is a fragile achievement" . . . I think immediately of the North Vietnamese children learning to read and write in outdoor schools with bomb shelters alongside, with thick, thatched caps ready on the benches to protect their heads and faces from the steel pellets of fragmentation bombs. Shannon warns us about "old and civilized societies" that have abandoned their "shared conviction that reason should prevail, that compromises are necessary, and that we should have a decent respect for one another's opinions" —and he apparently includes Tsarist Russia in his list! Now *that* reading of history is peculiar indeed. I fear it reveals more about liberal anti-Communism than was intended.

Shannon insists, and I am willing to grant him the point, that "there are no devils" but "only tired, worried, conscientious men" in Washington. Would he, or more important, would Mr. Rusk grant the same about Hanoi or the jungle headquarters of the N.L.F.? Yet I see no contradiction in the fact that tired, worried, conscientious men—on both sides—may also be "simple-minded," or guilty of "myopia." Some of them may even suffer from "quintessential vacuity," a condition which can as easily be brought about as prevented by all that conscientious fatigue and worry.

There is a looseness in Mr. Shannon's reasoning, a one-sidedness which attracted all my attention when I first read him. I did not write my reply at once, however, and that was probably to the best. For at bottom I very much share his concern. I remember attending a debate between William Bundy and Senator Gruening at a Manhattan high school. Suddenly the auditorium was invaded by members of the Progressive Labor Party who brandished a banner before the stage and began to chant, "Bring the troops home, NOW!" The chairman waited for a few minutes for the demonstration to end. The chant continued. The chairman asked for quiet so the debate could go on. He was ignored. He called the ushers to escort the chanters out. The demonstrators pummeled them. The audience, overwhelmingly anti-war, began to grow restive and the sparks of a riot were flashing when, much to the relief of all these good liberals, a long line of police filed in and dragged out the demonstrators, who were duly shouting "Police brutality!" At last, the debate could proceed.

At that time—before we were numbed by riots and "confrontations"—I left the meeting feeling terribly empty, terribly afraid for the "fragile achievement" of civilized self-government. I have felt that way on numerous occasions since. When I watched TV films of the Washington Mobilization, for example.

Or when I read William Shannon's column.

Because, in the very process of defining the serious crisis of American politics, Shannon's column suggests how little we can expect from "established" liberalism in the way of a solution. For, under the apparent concern of so much contemporary liberalism, I can sense only a vast complacency.

Complacent in its view of the past, to begin with. Like Mr. Shannon, I tend to distrust the politics of anyone not keenly aware of the bloody tragedies of the twentieth century and of the twisted ends which have been frequently served by various forms of uncompromising radicalism. But I also know that history is not that conveniently simple, that these tragedies also have their roots in revolutions that failed, in compromises that should never have been made, and in the polite submission to courteous discourse and the rule of "law" when what was called for was direct action and taking to the streets. A Cold War counter-ideology has been constructed, not infrequently under the generous patronage of the C.I.A., on a simplified version of what happened in Ger-

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many and Russia. In a manner approaching blasphemy, the victims of Stalin and Hitler have been used to quiet dissent and defend the status quo. In all of this, liberalism has more often acquiesced than protested.

The "established" liberal view of the American past is similarly complacent and, perhaps more important, the accomplishments of America, in contrast to all those other unstable nations, are due to this dedication to civil discourse and this willingness to compromise and to work within the framework. Those who went beyond the framework—the Abolitionists, the Populists, the Wobblies, and so on—were all probably misfits and incipient Nazis. Mr. Shannon is a historian, author of an excellent book on the Irish experience in America. He knows as well as I do that everything from corruption to riots to a bishop's threat to burn New York to the ground went into the Irish struggle to find a place in this land. Nonetheless, I sense from his column that he has accepted the self-satisfied, truncated liberal view of American history.

It is a view which, above all, forgets the American Negro. For, after all, can we even begin to properly assess the current threat to the "rule of law" in America without mentioning, as Shannon does not, the black struggle? It is the black sub-proletariat, and not peace marchers, who have rioted, brought massive troop interventions in our cities, and even today are organizing armed rebellion. It was in the black struggle in America's South—where "the common courtesies of civil discourse" mean "yes suh" and "c'm here, boy"—that today's antiwar demonstrators learned the techniques of direct action and the shortcomings of the rule of law.

About this element in America's past, complacent liberalism, for all its deploring of racism, has little to say. It is willing to recognize certain events in other nations' histories as almost fatal flaws which, in the absence of heroic counter-efforts, doomed those lands to violence and tragedy: the surrender of the German liberals to Bismarck, for example, or the religious division of France at the time of the Revolution. It is seldom willing to examine our own past as critically, to admit that the authoritarianism of the white race and the division of our people into "two Americas" was enshrined in the U.S. Constitution just as much as Prussian authoritarianism was enshrined in Germany's or French division was enshrined in the Civil Constitutions of the Clergy. My high school texts did not teach me that the ending of Reconstruction in 1876 was the last act in a tragedy for which we would pay dearly. Typically, they taught me that, like the Founding Fathers' agreement on slavery, this was a great example of the American ability to compromise.

Typically, the liberal New York *Times Magazine* recently asked a distinguished author to comment on the causes "for the *current* breaking of America into two parts, based on race." (My italics.)

The tragedy of American history does not reside in "the powerful reactionary forces"—that is melodrama, not tragedy—but in the *liberal* forces who were sensitive to racial injustice but, time and again, sacrificed the chance to do anything about it for other ends which they considered more important, to complete the Constitution, to more easily reunify the federal union, to fight the war in Vietnam.

Perhaps it is this complacency about the American past which explains liberalism's complacency about the American present. Mr. Shannon considers our present war leaders as "[1] responsible centrists. . . . [2] striving to serve the nation as best they can. . . . [3] at the very worst . . . guilty of errors, not crimes." At each point, this estimation disturbs me.

1. The main argument for considering these men "centrists" is that in the Senate Judiciary Committee, in the military, and under the rocks in Mississippi and California, one can find forces advocating even more dangerous and brutal policies than the ones the U.S. now pursues. This fact strikes me as cause for the greatest concern and not self-congratulation about our present leadership. Was Hindenburg a "responsible centrist" just because Hitler was waiting in the wings? Is there such a thing as an "irresponsible centrist"?

2. Judging leaders by intentions, by the fact that they are doing their best, is comforting but not very meaningful. Stalin was probably striving to do his best for Russia in a complicated, difficult situation when he signed the pact with Germany.

3. The distinction between errors and crimes is scarcely any more helpful, except once again on the level of motives and intentions. The meaningful distinction is between little errors and errors so big, so terrible in their results, whatever their motivation, that we should react to them with the same kind of firmness, the same degree of intolerance, if you will, with which we oppose ordinary crimes.

But let us admit it, this language does not operate on the logical but on the psychological plane. It is the language of Boy Scouts and schoolchildren. One does one's best. Errors can be erased and corrected.

It is this attitude which creates the credibility gap between liberals and today's peace marchers. Schlesinger may write about *The Bitter Heritage* and Draper about the *Abuse of Power*, but they barely touch upon the question of how bad were the genes which account for the heritage or whether there is not something fundamentally awry with a power which can be abused so easily, so extensively, so systematically. There is no use in sermonizing about the overpublicized but still significant rejection of American values by middle-class hippies. But one should be reminded that a large number of young Americans have seen how different their country looks not only from Mississippi and Alabama but also from Andean villages and African mud houses. A country swift to promise but slow to deliver. A country rich beyond belief but for all sorts of unimpeachable reasons

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simply unable to do much about worldwide misery. A country capable of spending billions and solving every kind of technological problem when military needs arise but stymied by the balance of payments problem when it comes to foreign aid, a nation "forced" to prevent revolutions and back oligarchies because of the Communist danger. The hard facts of life, in a selective fashion.

To these Americans, the United States looks, as I am surprised it doesn't to Irish historian Shannon, very much like Manchesterian England which had no choice but to let Ireland starve because of the inevitable workings of supply and demand.

I am hardly convinced by the current radical explanation for all America's evils, monopoly capitalism. Is the repeated liberal explanation—a few "mistakes of judgment and failures of insight"—any more convincing? Are the liberals willing to cut a little deeper? A large percentage of today's peace marchers would conduct themselves like liberals if liberals would conduct themselves as though what needs to be changed in America is something more than putting a J.F.K. back in the White House, stopping the supersonic transport, preserving the redwoods, and reforming the Ways and Means Committee.

This last remark brings me to my final lament: the complacency of established liberalism about the very civil discourse, self-government, political freedom and rule of law it likes to recommend. Like Mr. Shannon and most liberal theorists, I firmly believe that a nation cannot progress democratically without a certain agreement on "the rules of the game." But I do not believe that the "rules of the game" as they exist in America are even within shouting distance of what might be called the democratic ideal: every citizen playing a full role in determining his destiny. What is the level of civil discourse in the U.S. Congress and in the editorial columns of most of America's newspapers? What does the rule of law mean for vast numbers of the lower classes?

The full pathos of this situation is summed up in the opening and closing sentences of one of Mr. Shannon's arguments: "In view of all these facts, I find it difficult to understand the peace advocates' impatience with politics. . . . there are discernible, important differences in temperament and approach between, say, Romney and Reagan." Given such a choice, and even apart from the fact that the peace advocates can have almost nothing to say about whether it is Romney or Reagan, I find it difficult to understand Shannon's difficulty in understanding.

Substantive Self-Government

Of course, let us not overthrow the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. But, besides a few reforms of Congress, are there no steps yet to be taken to achieve *substantive* and not merely theoretical self-government? Can we have a system in which rich and poor have an equal chance for political office? Is that so shocking? Can we have a choice of presidential candidates other than millionaires, big businessmen and movie stars? Can we have an organization of the media so that dissenting viewpoints can be stated other than in the current fashion: by *simplificateurs* and "stars" like Stokely Carmichael and William F. Buckley, Jr., who are quickly annexed to the entertainment industry? Can we alter our economic arrangements so that workers have a control over, and a sense of responsibility for, the work which consumes so many years of their lives?

I do not think that established liberalism is asking questions like these. It has sensed the changes in our society which the answers might entail; and fearfully, like aristocratic conservatism before the prospect of universal suffrage, it has recoiled. *In practice, established liberalism has quietly resigned itself to a discreet elitism.*

If liberalism wishes its plea for the "common courtesies" to be heard, it should show a keener awareness of a simple fact we all know. In large measure, the "common courtesies" and the "rules of the game" at any period are a reflection of the status quo and the current distribution of power. They are instruments for change, yes; but they can also serve to legitimize and maintain the brutality and exploitation which the social system of the moment entails. As the admirable motto of *Esprit* puts it: they are part of the "established disorder."

What liberals like Mr. Shannon or those at Freedom House seem to see is a number of *separate* questions. The question of Vietnam. The question of racial conflict. The question of rich and poor nations. The question of the state of civil discourse and law and order. They assume that this last question is largely answered and that the answer, the present established standards, must serve as a framework for the answers to the other questions.

I do not think this assumption will be accepted by those whom they hope to counsel, who are more apt to feel that American standards of discourse and legality must be judged by the results they produce. If our nation can wage certain kinds of wars, oppress large classes of its population, and act toward the developing world like nineteenth-century *laissez-faire* capitalists, then perhaps something is terribly wrong with the processes of discourse and legality which allow this.

I do not think, then, that it is so helpful to think of Vietnam (or racism, or economic imperialism) as one issue and the "character of the national debate and the forms which dissent takes" as another and "more important" issue. They are part and parcel of the same issue—will there be freedom and justice at home and abroad?—and they will be resolved together or not at all.

Let me close with an apology to William Shannon. His column has been the occasion of my writing; I found it symptomatic, and I have returned to his words frequently. Mr. Shannon, however, is not my subject, but a liberalism for which he is hardly responsible and with which

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he cannot be simply identified. (A liberalism, I should add, which, as much as any single political approach, has formed my own political outlook.) I fear that in aiming at another target across his bow I may have unintentionally overextended the meaning of his phrases or linked him with attitudes that are not his.

There is much on which we agree. No more than he, do I favor "rancor or vilification or violence," though I think there is a time for anger and calling a myopic a myopic, and that the peace marchers are not the main offenders against non-violence and "peaceful politics." Above all, we agree that the political life of the U.S. is in grave crisis. And that is a situation which can scarcely be discussed too much or too vigorously.

What price peace?

A THEOLOGY OF CONFLICT

JOHN J. LALLY

"Do not imagine that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have come to bring a sword, not peace." (Matthew X, 34)

Many Catholics believe that interpersonal conflict—between persons, between person and institution, or between groups—which ruptures peace in the Church, in the community, or in the family, is "the work of the Devil." But I am convinced that the avoidance or stifling of such conflict often is a sign of immaturity and a block to the Spirit.

In Christianity, peace among men, harmony in the community, have traditionally been held to be both fruits and hallmarks of Christian life and have been closely linked to the central virtue of love (*caritas*). The bases for this in Scripture and in the liturgy are many and well-known. However, in the development of doctrine, particularly in the Roman Catholic Church, the emphasis on harmony, especially within the Church, became excessive. As a result, Church teaching about human relations came to be one-sided. Love of neighbor became too tied to peace, tranquillity, order, stability and often, at least indirectly, to security and the status quo. If change were deemed desirable, it was to be brought about gradually, with a minimum of confrontation between those with sharply differing views. Revolution, in thought or society, was not recognized as a legitimate means of change.

Examples of this tendency occur in much traditional Catholic spirituality. In the *Introduction to the Devout Life*, for example, St. Francis de Sales implies that although a Christian must resist evil and correct the faults of those for whom he is responsible, he must nevertheless *always* do so peacefully and gently; it would be better if he never expressed even a just and reasonable anger. In the social encyclicals, the Popes stress the goodness of class harmony to the practical exclusion of class conflict (even nonviolent) as a legitimate means of striving for human rights. And gradualist theology traditionally has opposed dialectical confrontations, a stance that has hampered the development of doctrine. (As John P. Sisk has indicated in a recent essay in the *National Catholic Reporter*, this overemphasis on harmony, order and unity in the Church has been in large measure due to the reaction of the Church as institution to recurrent perceived threats to its existence.) In short, the place of interpersonal conflict in Catholicism has been greatly overlooked, neglected or avoided by the Church, at least until Vatican II. Even today much of the resistance to criticism, debate and struggle for human rights in the Church indicates how common pre-conciliar thinking on the subject is. Nevertheless, parts of the New Testament and findings from the modern sciences open other vistas upon Christian life and love. For, although complicating them and introducing an element of paradox, interpersonal conflict seems to be integral to the Christian mission and message, to Christian life and, indeed, to all human life.

Psychoanalysts, following Freud, claim to have established that the child inevitably experiences rivalry toward his parents or parent-surrogates and his siblings (if he has any) during the "oedipal phase." Moreover, it is held, these childhood conflicts are essential to normal human development. Similarly, psychology shows that the adolescent's natural strivings for identity and independence invariably bring him into some opposition to the hitherto recognized authority of the older generation. Conflict is also natural in adult relationships. Its expression can act as a kind of safety device that prevents the inner build-up of smoldering resentments which can be more destructive of human relationships than the conflict itself. A West Coast psychotherapist, discussing the inevitable disagreements and quarrels in marriage, has said that we must remove the shame from them, that we should not repress conflict, but channel it, sticking to the disputed subject and trying to resolve the disagreement with logic rather

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than invective. In marriage, some disputes can be expected. The real harm is done when their causes are not worked out, but magnified into abiding hatreds.

A recent collection of anthropological essays, edited by Paul Bohannan, provides fascinating analyses of conflict in various cultures throughout the world. Bohannan, himself an anthropologist, says that conflict is useful; that, indeed, society is impossible without it. Sociologist Lewis Coser in *The Function of Social Conflict* makes the same point. Coser affirms that social conflict, as has been generally assumed, is often destructive. His main thesis, however, is: "Far from being only a 'negative' factor which 'tears apart,' social conflict may fulfill a number of determinate functions in groups and other interpersonal relations . . ."

Coser then goes on to clarify what he sees as the functions of social conflict in discussing sixteen basic propositions, distilled primarily from the work of Georg Simmel. For example, from one proposition concerning in-group conflict: Within pluralistic societies (built on multiple group affiliations, each of which involves its members' personalities only segmentally) the crisscrossing of intergroup conflicts tends to "sew the social system together," one such conflict cancelling out another, and thus to prevent disintegration along a single primary line of cleavage. Thus, the stability of bureaucratic structures may be accounted for in part by the fact that a multiplicity of conflicts between various bureaus and offices prevents the formation of a united front, for instance, of low-status against high-status members of the hierarchy. Three other propositions relate to conflict with out-groups or enemies and how it tends to increase the internal cohesion of a group.

In his research on small groups at the Harvard Laboratory of Social Relations, Robert F. Bales has found that task-oriented group activities tend to generate rivalries and tensions among group members. This necessitates periodic group activity oriented more or less directly to re-establishing members' feeling of solidarity or integration with each other in the group. This bit of theory can be extended to social phenomena outside of the laboratory; for example, the office party after the strains of meeting a big deadline.

Finally, the experience of all of us tends to corroborate the thesis which this presentation of findings from the behavioral sciences is intended to illustrate: At least some conflict between men is normal, natural and quite often necessary and functional. By this I do not mean to say that such conflict is, in itself, necessarily good. But it does seem that any ethics or morality based on or in accord with natural law must take these things into account —as should, especially, a Christian theology for which "grace builds upon nature."

Beyond the assertion that at least some interpersonal conflict is natural and healthy, Christ's life and words clearly demonstrate that at least some conflict with others is also an integral part of truly Christian life. The mission of teaching and bearing witness to him which Christ entrusted to his followers would result in antagonism and even persecution. In the face of such opposition, his disciples should not retreat, but rather persist in their mission even though it cast them as defendants before the high tribunals and seats of power of the world. But He assured them that they would not have to do this alone. In such encounters the Spirit would assert the Word through them. Excellent illustrations of the understanding of this in the early Church are found in the post-Pentecostal activities of the Apostles, as recorded in Acts, and in the mission of Paul to the Gentiles.

Scripture indicates, too, that conflict with those outside of the People of God is not the only kind Christians must expect. As Gregory Baum has recently suggested, Jesus' struggle with the high priests, pharisees, and sadduccess —the legitimate authorities of the eccelesiastical establishment of the time—is a kind of prototype which, for the Christian, is applicable to every institution, including the Church, insofar as unChristian patterns are present in it. Not unrelated to the spirit of this is Paul's resistance of Peter to his face over Peter's reluctance to admit into the Church Gentiles who weren't first received into the Jewish community.

In spite of these and other New Testament bases for "Christian conflict," many Catholic clergy and laity tend to see interpersonal conflict within the Church always as evil or weakness, never as involving virtue or being natural and necessary to the development of a Church that is human as well as divine. Although dialogue—which has the connotation of being both peaceful and officially sanctioned by the Church—is looked upon as an interaction between persons, when conflict within the Church is considered, it is often made acceptable only on condition that the opponents be disembodied and that it take place solely in the realm of ideas. According to this way of thinking, conflict should be between ideas, never between men.

Yet, in defending this position, even its proponents necessarily find themselves, although arguing *about* ideas, nevertheless arguing *with* those who disagree with them—persons. Catholics are often forced into such an unrealistic and artificial position and into such sophistry because, as I have suggested earlier, in effective, traditional Catholic theology the concept of love (*caritas*), as applied to personal relations within the Church, has been too closely identified with the concept of peace or harmony between Catholics, thus leaving conflict between them virtually incompatible with love.

In a Catholic magazine a priest recently wrote that, in the Church, conflict between persons " . . . is in opposition to its basic spirit, 'Love one another as I have loved you' . . . When Christ told us to love our enemies, He certainly presumed that we would be loving our fellow Christians." But Jesus also certainly implied that sometimes our

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fellow Christians would (even should) be our opponents. The rest of the Scriptural quotation which begins this essay is: "I have come to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter with her mother . . . a man's enemies will be the people of his own house."

Is interpersonal conflict which is entered into in the spirit of Christ in opposition to his law of love (or is other conflict necessarily so)? Was Christ ever lacking in love in his conflicts with his enemies? St. Paul might have been a bit uncharitable to St. Peter when he resisted the imposition of Jewish prescriptions upon Gentile Christians. Even saints' reactions can be exaggerated. But Paul obviously was acting predominantly in and with the Spirit of Christ. In spite of differences like that, and, paradoxically, sometimes because of them, the early Christians were known for "how they love one another."

Indeed, love of neighbor often requires the Christian to enter into conflict with others in the Church. An example of this stands out in some recent words of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen: "The mission of the Church is to participate in Christ's sufferings in the world and to have a kind of *lover's quarrel* with those members who would not feel the pain of the stripes on the backs of others." (Italics added.) But if in the minds of many Catholics love is so tied to harmony—or even, by extension, to the status quo—that conflict becomes a bad or dangerous thing, then the demands of love (or of justice, or of truth) probably will go unheeded. The current shock and disturbance among many Catholics over the increasing amount of criticism and other conflict in the Church since Vatican II is partially due to this way of thinking. In such a situation, merely responding to the critics with public pleas for more charity is likely to reinforce the notion that such critics are necessarily uncharitable. Catholics need to learn that love does not always require harmony and that unity is not achieved only by uniformity nor is it incompatible with quite a bit of conflict with others.

So far, conflict in the Church, theological disagreement, criticism of policy or action, the struggle for human rights through persuasion, debate and even boycott, strike or other kinds of pressure (moral, academic, political, economic, etc.) are the kinds of conflict I have had in mind. They are all nonviolent. Indeed, for more and more Catholic thinkers it is difficult to conceive of violent conflict as being Christian regardless of who the enemy might be. Nevertheless, traditional Catholic teaching has permitted the use of violence in self-defense and in a just war. I see nonviolence as *the* Christian way, but I am not convinced that violence by the Christian is never called for —at least, as the lesser of two evils. (Pope Paul's brief discussion in *Populorum Progressio* of the right to expropriation and of revolution in the developing nations is worthy of consideration in this connection.) This is truly a difficult subject. What is disturbing, however, are the inconsistencies, past and present, in Catholic thinking as well as in Catholic practice about the relations among love, peace and conflict. For example, many American Catholics, including bishops and other clergy, support a war which, even if we prescind from the question of its justness, is violent, while they have shied away from or opposed not only violent, but also nonviolent conflict in the struggle of the American Negro for his just rights.

By now the need for a complete, integrated Christian theology of interpersonal conflict should be apparent. Such a theology would have to deal in detail with all forms of interhuman conflict: "Christian" and other, violent and nonviolent, with others within the Church and outside of it. In order to do this adequately we should

examine and draw upon the Scriptures and scriptural scholarship, doctrinal and moral theology (Catholic and non-Catholic), non-Christian religious thought (Gandhi's, for instance), the work of behavioral scientists (including Marx's contributions in sociology), and also Church history, philosophy (especially neo-Whiteheadian process philosophy), and the social action of such men as Martin Luther King and Saul Alinsky, as well as any other sources of knowledge concerning conflict. (A truly complete theology of conflict should also include a thorough treatment of the place in Christian life of psychological conflicts, tensions and crises of growth *within* individuals. But that complementary subject is beyond the scope of this article which deals with only conflict *between* individuals.)

Since Vatican II, more and more Catholic thinkers have been writing in a positive way about interpersonal conflict (especially its nonviolent forms). In the United States, for example, Father Andrew Greeley, a sociologist, in an essay in his *The Hesitant Pilgrim,* stresses the functions of social conflict and criticism in the Church, especially as prerequisites of change and of growth, and concludes that such conflict should be institutionalized by Church leaders for the sake of the welfare of the whole institution. In *The Respectable Murderers,* Msgr. Paul Hanly Furfey indicates the need for a theology of disobedience applicable to relations with authorities inside as well as outside the Church. Fr. William DuBay in *The Human Church* argues forcefully that, inside the Church and out, man generally is not *given* his rights, but rather has to win them from those in power through the exercise of some power of his own. The French author, Pié

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Régamey, in *Non-Violence and the Christian Conscience*, has presented an excellent general theological treatise on nonviolence, which in its positive aspect includes what I would call nonviolent conflict entered into in the spirit of Christ. However, more writings such as these, as well as others which link them together theologically, are needed.

The Paradox of 'Christian Conflict'

I concede that recent disagreements and conflicts between liberals and conservatives in the Church have often been petty, intramural quarrels, lacking in charity and seemingly oblivious to the world outside the Church. Still, the same may be said of many attempts to preserve harmony, which can be preoccupied with a desire "not to rock the boat," and can be based on dishonesty and cowardice. For Christians, like anyone else, tend to act out of mixed motives and are in constant need of personal reformation and renewal in love. Yet it is true that, as necessary as conflict often is, it requires more effort to approach it in a spirit of love than it does to establish or preserve peaceful relations. But we must believe that if Christ asks us to love our neighbor, including our enemy, He will provide us with the ability to do so.

Let me emphasize that I favor interpersonal conflict when it is necessary and called for by, or at least is compatible with, the spirit of Christ; not for its own sake or when it is the product of willed hatred of persons, excludes love of one's opponents or is offensively personal.

A practical point, recently suggested by Fr. Greeley, might be considered here. In dialogue with those of different values or opinions, it might be better tactics to attempt first to stress the things agreed on rather than points of conflict until some trust is established. Greeley says that in practice ". . . the revolutionary yapping at people's heels may frighten the person being yapped at into some sort of Thermidorian reaction and indeed do more harm than good in the long run to his own cause."

"Christian conflict" and "Christianized conflict" do involve paradox. Conflict with persons does not easily blend with loving and accepting them. Man's heart yearns for peace, not conflict. Peace is a dominant theme in Christ's life and teachings and in the liturgy. What then of Christ's and the Church's prayer for peace? I would suggest that the perfect peace of Christ is eschatological; that, *in via,* harmony in human relations inevitably alternates with conflict in a kind of dialectic—conflict always involving striving toward a new harmony, which itself is subject to change through further strivings and conflicts—but that a certain abiding interior peace, even in the midst of conflict, is possible.

Perhaps the application of the Bales' model, mentioned above, to the Christian *in via* can provide an insight here. Participation in the Lord's Supper should help to reestablish the Christian's solidarity with his brothers after the demands of the Mission have generated some tensions and rivalries between him and them, as well as to refresh his love for them and to renew his spirit for the resumption of the Mission.

Finally, an efficacious theology of interpersonal conflict can thrive in the Church only when supported by a favorable social climate and favorable structural or institutional conditions. The creation of such a climate and such conditions (for example, a plurality of bases of power within the Church) itself involves conflict. We cannot, then, escape the fact that as Christians, as human beings, we must face life and act—whether that action requires conflicting or peaceful relations with our brothers. But always that action should be in the Spirit of Christ, who is Love.

RED ROMANTICISM

THE STAGE

Aleksei Arbuzov's "The Promise" is a boulevard play. It makes little difference whether the thoroughfare in question is a Parisian *grand boulevard;* New York's Broadway, that boulevard of housebroken dreams; or, as here, Nevsky Prospect. "The Promise" is commercial, slightly sophomoric, and quite harmless. Its chief—and gratuitous—distinction is to hail from the other side of a notorious, though non-theatrical, curtain. There must be scores of plays like this written every year in every country from Finland to Uruguay, but to produce and applaud them would, presumably, not constitute our pious bit toward quelling the Cold War.

"The Promise" is the story of 17 years in the lives of three young Russians: quite literally a story, as the play struggles to follow their development and relationship step by narrative step. The first act is in six scenes covering three months in 1942 during the Siege of Leningrad. A girl of 16, Lika, and two boys of 18, Marat (nicknamed Marik) and Leonidik, are thrown together as derelicts in an abandoned building and help one another to survive. Lika wants to become a great medical scientist, Marat a bridge-builder, Leonidik a poet. Both boys, about to go off to battle, are in love with Lika, who prefers the more manly though mendacious Marat to the more outspoken but introverted and dependent Leonidik. While bombs burst all around, the kids vow to make it a better world after the war.

Act Two covers three months in 1946, just after the victory, in four scenes. Leonidik has lost an arm but is beginning to find himself as a poet; he also drinks, and absurdly keeps talking of himself in the third person as if he were a Red Indian. Marat has become a war hero, but he is much shyer than his friend and when it comes to wooing Lika, now a medical student and future Commu-

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nist Madame Curie. Though Marat and Lika are made for each other, their stubborn timidity keeps them apart. Lika marries that Russian Marchbanks, Leonidik, who needs her mothering, while Marat goes off to build bridges.

The third act consists of four scenes during December 1959. Each of our three friends has fallen short of his ambitious vow: Lika is only a successful G.P., her husband a mere academic poetaster, and Marat, that Soviet Solness, has copped out on his most daring bridge design. But Leonidik, after 13 years of marriage, gallantly yields Lika to Marat, and goes off by himself to become a man. The first Thirteen-Year Plan has failed, long live the next one, in which the solemn promise to the future, abetted by the marriage of true minds, may yet become a reality.

If I have dwelt on this simple story at length, it is because I would not want to rob the play of what most characterizes it: simple-mindedness. Actually, as a long, sprawling novel, stuffed with war-and-peacetime details, Arbuzov's work might have competed with the middle-of-the-road fictions of a Konstantin Simonov, an Ehrenburg, a Paustovsky. As a play, its snapshot-like scenes go by before they could afford substantial insights into character and history, but well after they have begun to pall on us with their schematism and predictability. The dialogue is innocuous, and if we were hastily reading it as subtitles in a Russian movie, we might even consider it modestly engaging.

But, ultimately, it is all far too conventional, literalistic, and goody-goody: the prescribed underlying optimism tempered by a mild, scarcely less formulaic, hardheadedness. It has been saluted as a departure from Socialist Realism, but, at best, it gets as far as Social-Democratic Realism. The play's Russian title is "My Poor Marat"—the point being, I suppose, that it is the heroic man of action who needs the compassionate ministrations of love more than does the self-indulgent dreamer—and the trouble is precisely that there is too much Marat here and not enough Sade. The asperities of both love and war are treated much too decorously, dutifully and safely—although for this, lack of freedom of expression may be partly responsible.

An English cast performs smoothly though supererogatorily—for once, Americans would have done just as well—under Frank Hauser's meticulous albeit uninventive direction. Both Ian McKellen and Ian McShane manage their parts nicely down to the very Russianness, but Eileen Atkins, who was superb last season as Sister George's protégée, is miscast and jarring as a Cockneyfied Lika.

The original title, "My Poor Marat," could not be used in England, because it conflicted with the then current "Marat/Sade" of Peter Weiss. For a while, the author considered "My Poor Marik" and "My Poor Hero." Nearer the mark, I think, would have been "My Poor Play." (*Closed at the Henry Miller*) JOHN SIMON

NO FLAG, NO RALLY

THE SCREEN

I wish "How I Won the War" were as good as producer-director Richard Lester's intentions in making this anti-war-film film. Telling the rambling story of likable, young, very naive and very Establishment Lt. Goodbody (expertly played by Michael Crawford) and his unit who wander and fight through a series of battles in World War II, Lester lampoons and shows his contempt for all the rally-round-the-flag-boys films that have been glorifying war since the early days of movies. Some of the jokes in the far-out scenes as Lester ribs war-movie clichés are outrageously funny and some are just outrageous. Most of the film is told by Lt. Goodbody in flashbacks that show, although he misses the irony, why he thinks he won the war. Because this British movie has almost no plot line in Charles Wood's screenplay and because there is no character development, "How I Won" becomes a series of vaudeville skits much like the earlier English stage revue, "Oh What a Lovely War." Although the cast (which includes John Lennon, Roy Kinnear, Michael Hordern, and many, many others) is good throughout, we never identify with the characters; and the actors, some of whom are difficult to understand because of the English slang and dialects, are only actors illustrating a barb or a joke.

It becomes obvious as "How I Won the War" rolls along with its mixture of grim battle scenes (Dunkirk, Dieppe, etc.) and ridiculous situations (the building of a cricket pitch in North Africa, the Churchill ventriloquist's dummy saying, "Any chance of battle; I want a battle") and the musical score (which includes themes from "Lawrence of Arabia" and "The Bridge on the River Kwai") and most important the use of fantasy and inventive cinema (the four battle scenes are done in different colors and later some of the soldiers killed in those battles return to the unit completely painted in the green or sepia or pink of the battle color) that Richard Lester is making not so much a satire on war films and war as a neorealism and surrealism picture. Juxtaposing bloody combat with a wisecrack ("Give the English soldier plenty of tea and he'll die for you") or having wounded Beatle John Lennon holding in his bloody guts and saying right to the audience: "You didn't expect this, did you?" comes as a shock; and Lester means to shock us and remind us that war is hell and absurd and futile.

While applauding Lester's intentions in making this black comedy and in striking at war by kidding war pictures, I don't think "How I Won the War" does what he had in mind. The dying soldiers and gory battle scenes hardly put us in a mood for the clowning. Furthermore, too often the comedy though black is not very funny and

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For Christmas Giving

Journals of opinion have their especially exciting moments, such as *Commonweal* had during the Spanish Civil War and the heyday of McCarthyism. Or, again, at an interval of great expectations between the 3rd and 4th sessions of the Council when the magazine's circulation reached a previous high point. And now *Commonweal's* circulation is at an all-time high, as the most basic issues are confronting the Church and human society. This journal's relevance today is what makes it so thoughtful and tasteful a gift for Christmas.

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Lester, anxious to have his complete say against any glorification of war has crowded too much into his movie, which becomes confusing at times and runs far too long. I also wonder for whom the film is made. Warmongers aren't likely to see it. The anti-war folk who understand it and get its flights of fancy and in-jokes will lap it up and become even more anti-war. Since Lester is one of my favorite movie makers (especially after he followed the Beatle films with "The Knack"), I wanted to root for "How I Won the War" and instead I am deploring his lack of discipline and his use of scattered and random buckshot instead of a full blast at a serious subject. Perhaps serious themes are not Lester's forte. In any case, I'm still for Lester and I approve of his trying. "A man's reach should exceed his grasp."

I am sure that "The Girl and the General," an Italian war picture with touches of sentiment, is the kind of movie Richard Lester would hate. The time is World War I, and the setting northern Italy where the Austro-Hungarians clashed with the Italians and where this film was photographed in soft color. Its story mainly concerns an Italian private (Umberto Orsini) who captures an Austrian general (Rod Steiger) and then hopes to deliver him behind the Italian lines to collect the 1,000 lire reward and a gold medal. But when his general escapes, the soldier teams up with a peasant girl (Virna Lisi) so they can recapture this middle-aged, one-armed man and share the prized reward.

Each member of this threesome is mainly interested in himself and his own preservation; but in spite of the sentimental themes, the film stresses everyman's self-love and the mean qualities that war brings out in all of us. But beneath the meanness and greed there is also a touch of goodness, and director Pasquale Festa Campanile is extraordinarily successful in portraying the good and bad in the general and his youthful captors. Steiger gives one of his best performances as the tired but wily elder man, and Lisi and Orsini are fine as the determined young couple. In its way, "The Girl and the General" succeeds in saying war is hell better than the intellectual "How I Won the War." You are caught up in the tragedy of war in the Italian film and are moved. With the British film, you coldly agree but stay aloof. In any case, I hope both films win the attention they deserve. PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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JAMES CARROLL

SOON AFTER DARK

Headlights clang my shadow
Along some high spiked fence.
It stays behind without me
Like a too heavy stick
When a boy is running home.

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BOOKS

Pity the poor dragon

Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled

JOSEPH BUTTINGER

Praeger, $18.50

MORTIMER GRAVES

This 1,346 page, two-volume work is advertised by its publisher as "a full-scale English language history of Vietnam from the beginning of the French colonial period to the fall of Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963." This is something of an exaggeration. It is not a "full-scale" history, but a political and military history; it turns out to be oriented only to that part of Vietnam which lies below the 17th parallel—American-occupied Vietnam; and the effective time spread is from the early 1900's to the aforesaid 1963. Within these limits, however, it is a very valuable contribution to the comprehension of our Vietnam dilemma. More than 40 percent of it is devoted to notes, appendices, and an index and less than 60 percent to text, so it is a book for the serious non-specialist—whose only complaint might concern the shortage of non-French and English sources.

Buttinger's interpretations are legitimate and reasonable and often depart from hitherto accepted ones. For example, he believes that the parts played by Dulles and Spellman in forcing Ngo Dinh Diem on Bao Dai and by Bullitt in forcing Bao Dai on the French have been much exaggerated. He is especially apt at exploring, and frequently exploding, the little self-serving myths which crop up so frequently in the personal memoirs that form so much of the source material.

The principal villain in his drama is the French Establishment, especially the military, and the bureaucratic, commercial, and financial colons. He is a strenuous defender of Vietnamese national independence against all foreign control. His chapters on the rise and fall of Diem are especially provocative. He attributes this last, not so much to Diem's shortcomings as to the fact that an essentially foreign-infected dictatorship in the Diem style cannot compete successfully with an indigenous Communist movement. One wonders whether we have learned this lesson. He is quite fair to Ngo Dinh Diem as a person and to his limited but real accomplishments, even though he considers his regime an unrelieved disaster. Similarly with respect to Ho Chi Minh, he can be fair to the patriot while deploring the Communist government.

The first volume presents the antecedents of the modern French-Indochinese war, made possible only by American assistance. The second describes the failure of this French-American venture and its gradual transformation into an American war, which is just acquiring a full head of steam as his story ends. Readers will be reminded that American implication in Vietnamese affairs goes back to Franklin Roosevelt and World War II. Had Roosevelt lived on into 1946 or 1947, given his distrust of the French—and of Chiang Kai-shek—his lack of the morbidly superstitious attitude toward Communism which obsesses American policy, and given the enthusiasm of American observers in Hanoi for Ho Chi Minh, he would certainly not have made Truman's mistake of supporting French reconquest. He might even have recognized Viet Minh as the government of Vietnam and moved to establish its viability.

Truman's *volte face* in this respect—whatever its reasons, and they are still somewhat obscure—was our first step down the road to disaster. For a moment we thought that our precipitate descent had been arrested by an international agreement, freely negotiated around a conference table, and almost unanimously accepted, known as the Geneva Accord of 1954. It is a little unfortunate that the Buttinger work carries the garbled version of the key sentence in this document, which is unparsable and meaningless. The truer version is: "The military demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary." Almost every other sentence in the Accord is vague, but this one could hardly be more explicit.

The proximate cause of the present war is the Eisenhower-Dulles decision to subvert this provision by "constituting" the "provisional military demarcation line" a "political and territorial boundary," and subjecting the entire Vietnamese population below this boundary to the distant, shadowy and far from independent—to put it mildly—Saigon regime, which never accepted the Geneva Accord and can have no rights derivative from it. For it must be remembered that Saigon is some six hundred miles south of the provisional military demarcation line and at the time of the Accord, in the words of the *United States Army Area Handbook for Vietnam,* its regime's "effective control extended little beyond Saigon and there the municipal government and police were in the hands of gangsters and racketeers," a state of affairs which Buttinger describes more simply as "this government was then even in the South one in name only." This process of extending the domain of Saigon by conquest is now denominated "pacification," a term first employed to the same purpose by a waggish Frenchman a generation or more ago.

There are those who contend that we cannot now bother with history, that only the circumstances of 1967 are relevant. But a major circumstance of 1967 is the ignorance of too many Americans of what the war is all about. Obviously, it is hopeless to search for peace without reference to what caused the war. Hence, the more Americans who read the Buttinger book, the better the chance for American policies that will lead to an honorable peace. History is very important.

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What Have You Done for Me Lately?

WARREN MOSCOW

Prentice-Hall, $5.95

The Mayor's Game

ALLAN R. TALBOT

Harper & Row, $6.95

JAMES J. GRAHAM

Both these books deal with the kind of city politics that wins primary fights and rebuilds slum neighborhoods, but there is an important difference in perspective. Allan Talbot, a former official under Mayor Richard Lee of New Haven, inflates the real achievements of his hero to the level of a breathless campaign biography. Warren Moscow, on the other hand, from his vantage point of City Hall reporter and, more recently, as Executive Assistant to Mayor Wagner, has written an unassuming, but readable, sketch of the political life of New York City during the past 40 years.

Moscow recites in crisp journalese colorful anecdotes from and about politicians that are usually sufficiently detailed or unimportant to allay any desire for depth, but one story does cry out for authentication; a plea by Bronx Democratic leader Ed Flynn to the Vatican reportedly brought about the courtesy visit to Hyde Park by Cardinal Spellman in the late 40's which concluded the public controversy between him and the President's widow.

The author of *What Have You Done for Me Lately?* also draws upon his store of confidences for revelations that will not be found in back issues of the New York *Times*. It comes as a shock, for example, to know that gangsters played major roles in local politics as recently as 12 years ago. The book also contains a forthright discussion of police graft and other civic blemishes but Moscow rightly points out that patrolmen in New York would be jailed for what passes as acceptable conduct in many other American communities.

Cynicism is refreshingly absent from Moscow's book. The author loves his city and has a great deal of respect for the professionals who have had the gargantuan task of running it. In passing, he gently rebukes unnamed reformers for their political naiveté and crusading newspapers that refuse to retract editorial errors and seek special privileges from the city. He also has kind words for Carmine de Sapio and criticizes his former boss, Wagner, for sacrificing the enlightened chief of Manhattan's Regular Democrats to political expediency. Inexcusably, however, Moscow almost ignores the current incumbent, Mayor Lindsay, who at the very least deserves non-partisan praise for propagating the hopeful notion that New York is a "Fun City."

The honest efforts of Allan Talbot in "The Mayor's Game" to achieve objectivity and stimulate reader interest fail, it seems to me, because Talbot proceeds on the absurd assumption that Lee, during his tenure as Mayor of a city with a population the size of just one of Brooklyn's seven Congressional districts, faced problems proportionately as large as New York's. Consequently, the reader is inundated with details (who said which road should be built where) that can hardly be of interest to anyone who does not live in New Haven.

Ironically, Lee emerges from the ballyhoo about him as an autocratic, though talented, ebullient and paternalistic, old-line pol with progressive instincts. According to Talbot's account, Lee in 1963 forced three lily-white craft unions to accept 17 Negroes as members and in 1964 was instrumental in the passage of a comprehensive civil rights bill; but Talbot's failure to mention subsequent developments suggests, perhaps unfairly, that these were the usual token gestures. The book also contains some astonishing Election Day dialogue. The Mayor, familiarly hailed as "Dick" by one and all in the white areas, tells his colored workers he wants no Negroes canvassing on an all-white street. " 'We understand,' said one of the Negroes smiling: 'We hired some white boys to canvas there, Mr. Mayor.' "

It is also difficult to draw principles of general application from the much-publicized physical transformation of New Haven because of Talbot's preoccupation with Lee, his brilliant former assistant Edward Logue and an unpleasant claque of "Whiz Kid" Yalies who helped them. By attempting to transform a campaign slogan, "the rebirth of New Haven," into a Viking's Dream, Talbot tends to obscure the political genius that fused the coalition of diverse elements that helped create a model metropolis.

On this score, Talbot also slights Lee's predecessor who apparently was about to embark on the same massive renewal plan when defeated for reelection in 1953. In addition, Talbot describes but fails to stress the enormous contribution to the Mayor's success story made by Yale University, Lee's former employer, and from A. Whitney Griswold, its President at the time of his death in 1963 and Lee's close personal friend.

Yale, acting in the best interests of both Town and Gown, in fact provided the master architect, the cooperation of the university-oriented business establishment, and the votes of its faculty members and alumni for Lee and his policies. Yale's construction costs served as the seed money needed to match federal financing. A Yale Fellow helped bring Macy's to the renewal site. The proximity of Yale even served as the bait to lure white tenants into a predominantly Negro housing project, etc.

Significantly, the best chapters in "The Mayor's Game" concern matters of national interest that also did not directly involve Lee. Talbot adopts a measured tone to describe, too briefly, New Haven's successful efforts to achieve meaningful school integration and to establish a pioneering anti-poverty program, whose administrator, Mitchell Sviridoff also helped formulate the gigantic but tentative beginnings of a War on Poverty in New York City.

Whereas Warren Moscow, by artfully understating his case, does justice to Bob Wagner and others like him, readers of "The Mayor's Game" must guess that Richard Lee is that rare politician who appeared at the right moment in history to bridge the gulf between the Yale WASPS and the blue-collar Negro, Irish and Italian communities of New Haven.

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FORDHAM UNIVERSITY PRESS
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Cities In a Race With Time

JEANNE R. LOWE

Random House, $10

STEVEN V. ROBERTS

Everyone knows by now that there is a "crisis in the cities." Urban problems are almost a fad, the missile gap of the day. I half expect to see a new television series next season starring a big city mayor and his doughty sidekick, the urban renewal director.

Despite all the hoopla, the "urban crisis" is a more valid issue than the missile gap ever was. As Jeanne R. Lowe points out in her thoughtful new book, today's urban poor are distinctly different from the slum-dwellers of several generations back. Some reasons are obvious: the poor adaptation of rural Negroes and Puerto Ricans to city life; the shattering of the Negro family structure under white oppression. Others are more subtle. Negroes lack a sense of their history, and thus a feeling of pride and self-confidence. They have also lacked the private welfare organizations prevalent among such close-knit groups as the Jews or the Irish. Perhaps most important, they have migrated to the cities at a time when unskilled jobs are rapidly disappearing. The daily lot of the unemployed is hopelessness laced with anger.

Another reason for the crisis is simply the public's enhanced awareness of it: the crisis is as much in our minds as in the streets. The New York *Times,* for example, has more men covering the city in greater depth than ever before. There are almost as many books on cities as on cooking. Television practically spews the stench of a tenement into the living room. Moreover, as Miss Lowe notes, such rudimentary programs as urban renewal and public housing have merely chipped away the surface of the ghetto to reveal incredibly complex problems beneath.

One unfortunate result of the "crisis" has been to force politicians into looking for quick solutions. The public, once its conscience is bothered, wants answers. In any case, Americans have usually displayed a remarkable resistance to ambiguity and imperfection. This book makes clear just how imperfect some of the past answers, and current panaceas, really are. For example, the latest remedy for all that ails the cities is "private investment," an especially popular nostrum now that Vietnam is bleeding the public coffers dry.

Miss Lowe describes how private investment in the post-Civil War era despoiled our cities in the first place. Urban renewal programs have depended on private developers—who have built almost no new housing for the poor they uprooted. Even if private builders were given enough subsidies to make low-cost housing profitable, they would recoil at other problems: the agony of dealing with city, state and federal bureaucrats; the nasty problem of relocation; the growing militancy of local groups which want to control the future of their neighborhoods.

On the other hand, those who espouse vast federal expenditures fail to consider that most cities do not have enough talented people to use the money they get now. Or take school enrichment programs. Miss Lowe reports that very few have produced any measurable improvement in student performance. It has become increasingly clear that poor children are so emotionally and intellectually crippled by the time they get to school that many are beyond hope.

Miss Lowe somehow remains grittily optimistic. She offers five suggestions for immediate action which are a good place to start: better coordination of federal efforts in urban affairs; more realistic treatment of the fiscal problems of cities, most of which are losing tax revenues to the federal government; direct income supplements to poor families and an overhaul of the debilitating welfare system; increased public and private production of jobs and housing opportunities; and a greater involvement of urban universities which must supply the "philosophy" as well as the talent for the redevelopment of the cities.

In the end, Miss Lowe relies on the only dependable motive, self-interest: "One reason for optimism is the new awareness on the part of business and government leaders that there is an intimate relationship between local human capital—the education, talents and well-being of the people who live and work in a community—and the economic vitality and potential for renewal of that community."

PARISH BOOK

In March of 1966 *Commonweal* published a special issue completely devoted to the reform of the parish. The contents of that issue have now been enlarged to number seventeen essays, plus a Foreword by James O'Gara and an Afterword by Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan. Called *The Postconciliar Parish* and priced at $4.95, the book is published by P. J. Kenedy and Sons, New York.

Three Popes and the Jews

PINCHAS LAPIDE

Hawthorn Books, $6.95

GREGORY BAUM

This book, by an Israeli author, has been hailed as a defense of Pope Pius XII against the accusations dramatically raised in Hochhuth's "The Deputy." According to Mr. Lapide, "Unable to cure the sickness of an entire civilization, and unwilling to bear the brunt of Hitler's fury, the Pope, unlike many far mightier than he, alleviated, relieved, retrieved, appealed, petitioned—and saved as best he could by his own lights. Who but a prophet or a martyr could have done much more?"

The book is more than a defense of Pius XII. It is a study of the relationship of the Catholic Church to the Jewish people under the reigns of Pius XI, Pius XII and John XXIII. The author takes for granted that contemporary anti-Semitism is ultimately, in the last analysis, the fruit of Christian teaching and the Church's attitude to the Jews. Historians are not agreed on this theory, but there are also Christian scholars

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who hold the Christian tradition responsible for the prejudice and hatred of the Jews that characterizes our civilization. One might mention that Mr. Lapide's treatment of history prior to the present century is the weakest part of his book.

Mr. Lapide insists, however, that the events of the past must not prejudice the student of the present. The detailed examination of the relationship of the Catholic Church to the Jewish people over the last two generations leads to the impressive conclusion that in the members of the Church who were most faithful to their religion, this relationship was characterized by respect and the willingness to help. For 100 pages, the author examines what the Catholic Church did, in the various countries under Hitler's rule, to save the Jews from extermination. The Catholic reader who is today accustomed to self-accusation and the revelation of Christian cowardice is deeply moved by the detailed reports.

In the report on Budapest we read: The Lazarist Fathers hid 30 men in their convent; the Sisters of Mercy gave refuge to 150 children and 50 adults; the Sophianum Institute managed to shelter 80 women and 50 children; in the Notre Dame de Sion convent 110 persons survived the last Nazi winter; the Franciscan Sisters took in 120 children and 30 adults and helped the Nuncio fill in his pontifical passports and letters of protection. Sister Maria-Etela, their Mother Superior, the indefatigable organizer of a thousand rescue operations, died by a hand grenade in 1945. . . ." And so it goes on, for page after page. In most parts of the Nazi-occupied world it was a crime to hide Jews, punishable often by death. It is consoling to read—and who is not in need of consolation at certain moments?—how thousands of religious, trained in obedience, knew how to defy the authority of an unjust government.

According to the examination by Lapide, the Catholic Church, through her many institutions, encouraged by Pius XII and his staff, was instrumental in saving at least 700,000, probably as many as 860,000 Jews from certain death. He also gives an account of what the Catholic Church, and especially Pius XII failed to do, but he evaluates this failure by comparing it with the attitude of the nations of the West. The indifference of governments to the plight of the Jews was so great that the record of the Catholic Church, taking into account the good and the bad, was rather impressive. The crime of genocide, perpetrated by the Nazis, was such that the whole of Western civilization was implicated in it.

A section of Mr. Lapide's study deals with the Vatican relationship to the State of Israel. One would have to know more about Vatican politics than is available to the public to understand why the papal state has never acknowledged the State of Israel, established as it was by an act of the United Nations. This refusal on the part of the Vatican is a political gesture, not a religious one. Yet, since some of the so-called Catholic governments at the United Nations follow the lead of the Vatican, the papal refusal has often been embarrassing to Israel. For the present renewal of the Church it is useful that these purely political actions on the part of the papal states are made public. It may well be that the existence of an ecclesiastical State is, in our day, an anachronism.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 347)

has been the inverse relationship between war and domestic reform. "War is the death of reform," as Randolph Bourne put it 50 years ago. To engage

REVIEWERS

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2. "the defector"
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With Jenette Golds
Foreword by John Tracy Ellis

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in it is to unleash those very forces against which Mr. Johnson and Mr. Shannon so bitterly complain. If Ronald Reagan is elected President of the United States next year, and it is entirely possible that he will be, the one who will be structurally responsible, more than any other individual, will be President Johnson himself. The left's protest over all this may not be politically shrewd or well-advised; granted the enormous emotional investment on all sides, it is simply inevitable.

3)—The more rigid and inflexible the leaders are, the greater the outrage on the part of those who disagree with them on principle. Mr. Johnson is, domestically, the king of the pragmatists. In foreign policy, however, he and his circle of advisers are dogmatically and ideologically "anti-Communist"—at least when "Communism" is still a moving target, as in Vietnam. Under the specific circumstances of Vietnam, this has led us into a war which I cannot by any stretch of my imagination fit into the rubrics of a "just war." The name of the game in Vietnam, as I see it, is a concrete and "final" demonstration that wars of national liberation will not be allowed to succeed. What does this mean in human terms? The classic guerrilla analogy is that of "fish" (the guerrillas) swimming in "water" (a friendly or acquiescent local rural population). The counter-strategy? Smash the tank, empty out the "water," and then kill the "fish." This is the operational reality of what we are doing in South Vietnam. Whether the resultant "politicide" or "civicide" is fully equal in its evil human consequences to a deliberate policy of genocide, it is a moral atrocity for which no amount of career-saving, *Realpolitik* or finger-pointing in the general direction of China can provide a justification.

4)—The logical corollary of a deep sense of frustration and betrayal is a desire to secure revenge against those responsible. Desire for revenge, to be sure, is not a pretty emotion. On one level, at any rate, it can however be said to have useful political consequences. Any leaders attempt wherever possible to rationalize and justify their mistakes rather than to correct them; the bigger the mistake, the greater the attempt. In this case—and it seems to be one of those rare cases where an unambiguous mistake in foreign policy has been made by identifiable and responsible people—this has meant a steady Administration escalation of the rhetoric of our "commitment" in Southeast Asia with each war escalation.

In any event, the need to protect career and image (as well as to justify the choices made) makes existing leadership rigid and unyielding. At this stage it becomes useful to the political system as a whole to throw it out of office at the next election, something which (as in 1932 or 1952) often requires a large number of revenge-minded voters in the electorate. This entails the risk of jumping from the frying pan into the fire; but there are those of us who believe that another four years of the present Administration will probably land us in the fire anyway.

I am very inclined to agree with Mary McCarthy that the appropriate historical model for those of us who oppose this atrocious war is that of the Abolitionists in America prior to the Civil War. A reading of their experience reveals that they expected theirs to be a long-term battle for the country's conscience. They were consequently less inclined, on the whole, to engage in the kind of anarchic political expressionism which is so often found on campuses today and which Mr. Shannon (partly rightly, I think) deplores. This is also going to be a long-term enterprise, and we should remain unsurprised when we don't get immediate political results. What is vitally important now, as then, is to use every rational means to deny official Washington what it wants most: to deny it "consensus," and to withhold our legitimization from it. From 1857 to 1860, many responsible men in the North (Lincoln among them) came to believe that the United States might become a totalitarian slave-holding colossus spanning the whole Western Hemisphere unless something were done to resist while there was yet time. So today, a real question exists whether the United States will become—or is perhaps becoming—a militarized, neo-fascist empire. WALTER DEAN BURNHAM

Miles City, Mont.

To the Editors: HURRAY for William V. Shannon for his article "Still Time for Politics" in the Nov. 17 issue. It is about time one of the writers for *Commonweal* said what he said. *Commonweal* of recent date has been offering invective upon invective—instead of "reasoned, incisive commentary that befits its traditions."

What a contrast between the thoughts of Shannon, and the "musings" from jail from none other than publicity-seeker Philip Berrigan. Musings? Someone should inform him that many people considered his "bloody" action *amusing*, an action befitting the "way-out" people. He expresses joyful surprise over the honesty of the *Times* and

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the *Sun* accounts. What did he expect from any news media—denial that he had his bloody fun? . . .

WILLIAM J. SUPER, M. D.

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I have been reading *Commonweal* ever since it was born. For over a year I have been increasingly unhappy over the editors' increasing bitterness about Administration leaders. I was about to cancel my subscription when I saw that you had the courage to publish William V. Shannon's article, "Still Time for Politics." Perhaps this article will encourage you to stop the "verbal frenzy" which has characterized more editorial pages than I care to remember and to resume "incisive commentary that befits its (*Commonweal's*) traditions."

ELIZABETH COSGROVE

West Concord, Mass.

To the Editors: William V. Shannon (Nov. 17) laments that in "the national debate," there is "a growing impatience with politics . . . and a refusal to abide by the common courtesies of civil discourse. There is instead a preference for direct action, . . . and even a sneaking taste for violence."

I respectfully point out to Mr. Shannon that in the world debate, the United States, led by the Administration he defends, has long since given up politics and the common courtesies of civil discourse, preferring direct action and an overt—not a sneaking—taste for violence.

It is desperation that has made the peace advocates "impatient with politics." They have reached the reluctant conclusion that only direct action will stop their country's violence in the world debate before it is too late.

JOSEPH N. ULMAN, JR.

Ottawa, Ont.

To the Editors: . . . Can Mr. Shannon seriously refer to Johnson, Rusk and McNamara as "responsible centrists" in the face of the tragic violence they are responsible for in the name of "democracy," "peace" and "freedom"? It is not overstating the case to note that more and more of the members of the peace movement are beginning to see violent protest as the only method of countering such "legitimate" violence as napalm, since "legitimate" political pressure has failed to do so. . . . May I remind Mr. Shannon that his own country was founded by violent means, in an attempt to guarantee "self-government, political freedoms, and the rule of law"? I confess to a common view with numerous non-Americans the world over that the American attempt to deny these very liberties to the Vietnamese rings of intolerable arrogance and hypocrisy. . . .

Mr. Shannon goes on to discuss the reaction to Dean Rusk's recent speech and the language used in response to it and other Administration statements. The motives of these statements have to be "impugned." The only publicly-stated motives for continuing the war have been shown to be easily destroyed on both rational and humanitarian grounds. Their "serious arguments" have been shown to be empty and irrelevant. If they continue to repeat them after failing to meet rational and humanitarian arguments from their critics, it becomes a ludicrous stage show, and derision is the only way left to show public disenchantment with the ludicrousness. All attempts at reason and political counter-expression have failed. Is it "verbal frenzy" to call a spade a spade? Is Mr. Shannon one who prefers to talk about "credibility gaps" rather than "lies"? It is partly by the means of pussyfooting jargon that the Administration has succeeded in confusing the issue and concealing the reality of the war. . . .

RONALD W. PATTISON

Oops

In Saul Maloff's recommendation of *Children of Crisis* by Robert Coles, which appeared in our Critics' Choices in the Dec. 1 issue, a sentence reading . . . "The book is really about the unexperience of being Negro, or some aspects of it. . ." should have read "The book is really about the Ur-experience of being Negro. . . ." We regret the error.

THE EDITORS

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